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ABSTRACT

The quiet, but determined, censorship crisis in Virginia is a good example of the attitudes that produce censorship protests and of the damage that can be done. Although the criticisms have been sincere, they are based on total misinterpretations of the works involved. As may be seen from the excerpts taken from five books under fire, the objections may be to sexual references, obscene and profane words, the general tone, improper life styles, or religious sensitivities. However, in an atmosphere conducive to censorship, objections might be made to almost anything in a book. It is essential, therefore, that English teachers equip students to understand and to respond to literature and to resist being persuaded by the rhetorical skills of any writer. (JM)

Robert C. Small, Jr.

"And Then There Were None"--Take It Away! I Don't Like It

Robert C. Small, Jr.

As Richard Darling pointed out in "Censorship--An Old Story" (Elementary English, May, 1974 , pp. 691-696), efforts to censor the reading of school children go back a long ways. In the last two years, however, there seems to have been a major upsurge of such efforts; and they have frequently been successful. In North Dakota, as we all remember, copies of Slaughterhouse Five were burned; and the townspeople and school administrators involved were roundly condemned by both national television and news magazines (Newsweek, November 26, 1973, p. 37). In Kanawha County, West Virginia, schools were closed and bombed following charges that textbooks contained un-American, filthy, and anti-Christian material. Numerous reports have appeared giving the details and causes of this continuing controversy (see especially Kanawha County, West Virginia: A Textbook Study in Cultural Conflict, NEA, 1975). Cases have also been reported from Georgia (Phi Delta Kappan, May, 1974, pp. 611-613); Syracuse (Syracuse Herald Journal, May 21, 1974); and Columbus, Ohio (Educational Leadership, April, 1974, p. 651). And, of course, Ken Donelson in recent articles in the English Journal (February, 1974, pp. 47-51) and Elementary English (March, 1974, pp. 403-409) has listed many recently controversial books and the objections to them.

The Virginia Case

The censorship crisis in Virginia has not, perhaps fortunately, received the national attention of some of these other cases. There have been no shootings or bombings. It is, however, perhaps partly because it has taken place without such attention, a classic illustration of the attitudes which can produce such efforts at censorship. Classic or otherwise, the problem is there;

and, as these censorship cases have developed, the critics have progressed from such generalities as "filthy" and "anti-Christian" to the distribution of a list of passages from each of the five books under fire. This list of excerpts follows in its entirety. Nothing has been removed but the name of the county and the names and addresses of the three state offices referred to at the end.

Except in one case, the list does not reveal the names of the authors of nor the titles from which the quotations come. Such information is obviously essential. Here then are those authors and titles (they are identified by passage following the list on page 4).

James Agee - Let Us Now Praise Famous Men

Gwendolyn Brooks - "We Real Cool"

Frederick Brown - "Voodoo"

Walker Evans - Let Us Now Praise Famous Men

Herman Melville - Billy Budd (by way of Coxe and Chapman)

Albert Murray - "Train Whistle Guitar"

Malcolm X - The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Gordon Parks - A Choice of Weapons

Philip Roth - Goodbye Columbus

James Thurber - "The Night the Ghost Got In"

John Updike - "A & P"

Such a list of selections, authors, and titles is probably surprising, perhaps even confusing, to most of us, or would have been two years ago. It is hard to understand what censors could find so offensive about those few passages from authors like James Thurber and Gordon Parks that they have demanded the removal of the entire series. The objections are, however, sincere. They relate to the mere presence of any such material in the reading

Excerpts from the English literature textbooks known as the Responding series, used in the _____County Public Schools.

RESPONDING SIX - GRADE 12

Page 71 - "He's a man among men and Lord God among women"
Page 71 - "How come, little sooner, how goddam come?"
Page 75 - "Goddam it, watch me nail that sapsucker."
Page 76 - Goddam it, when I come back here to this burg, I'm Goddam man and a half.
Page 76 - "That son of a bitch knows his natural stuff."
Page 76 - "That bastard can steal lightening"
Page 76 - "Goddam I'm going to natural-born kick that son-of-a-bitch, kick the living guts out of it."
Page 77 - "So I said to myself goddam it."
Page 77 -"Goddam it to hell, Lil Buddy said,"
Page 79 - "Don't say a goddam mumbling word to me."
Page 80 - "Well, I'll be a son-of-a-bitch."

RESPONDING FIVE - GRADE 11

Page 317 - "Goddam your bloody heart, goddam prince of wales."
Page 317 - "Sick as a pink ass baby in a cradle,"
Page 318 - "Ramrod up his bum. You whore son cockney cullion."
Page 318 - "You whining bitchboy, by God I'll run my knife to the hilt in you. You son of a whore, pigsticker."
Page 210 - Voodoo and witchcraft study

RESPONDING FOUR - GRADE 10

Page 374 - "Don't you want some gas, nigger? Then why the hell don't you ask for it, nigger? Ten? Hell, nigger, this goddamned thing'll take more'n ten gallons."
Page 375 - "Well, if you all is so damned smart, why'n hell don't you go the limits?"
Page 117 - Why, Ivy Pritchert was one of the worst whores in this whole part of the country: only one that was worse was her mother.

RESPONDING THREE - GRADE 9

Page 94 - but a lot of black girls nearly got run over by some of those Negro males scrambling to get to those white women; you would have thought God had lowered some of his angels. From the autobiography of Malcolm X.
Page 264 - She was a chunky kid, with a good tan and a sweet broad soft-looking can with those two crescents of white just under it, where the sun never seems to hit, at the top of the backs of her legs.
Page 274 - his oxlike behind should have had a tail on it to flick the flies away--it infuriated me. "You goddam liar."
Page 274 - "No you ain't you snot-ass." And I saw five hairy knuckles right at my mouth.

RESPONDING TWO - GRADE 8

Page 80 - We real cool. We left school. We lurk late. We strike straight. We sing sin. We thin gin. We jass June. We die soon.

Page 76 - "Back, ye cowardly dogs," roared grandfather." "Back, ye Goddam lily-livered cattle."

Listed below are the names of the elected officials who can help reverse the trend that the school system has taken. If you are as concerned as parents should be, call these men.

A KEY TO THE AUTHORS AND TITLES FROM WHICH THE PASSAGES QUOTED ABOVE COME

Book Six (Twelfth Grade): All these passages come from "Train Whistle Guitar" by Albert Murray.

Book Five (Eleventh Grade): The first four passages (pp. 317 and 318) come from Billy Budd by Herman Melville in a play version by Louis O. Coxe and Robert Chapman. The last reference (p. 210) which is not to a passage but an entire short selection, is "Voodoo" by Frederick Brown.

Book Four (Tenth Grade): The first two passages (pp. 374 and 375) come from A Choice of Weapons by Gordon Parks. The last passage (p. 117) is from Let Us Now Praise Famous Men by James Agee and Walker Evans.

Book Three (Ninth Grade): The first passage (p. 94) is from The Autobiography of Malcolm X; the second (p. 264), from "A & P" by John Updike; and the last two (p. 274), from Goodbye Columbus by Philip Roth.

Book Two (Eighth Grade): The first passage (p. 80) is the entire poem "We Real Cool" by Gwendolyn Brooks. The other passage (p. 76) is from "The Night the Ghost Got In" by James Thurber.

matter of children and adolescents. But what, in fact, can these censors find to object to in such authors and selections?

1. Sexual References. These texts do not contain anything approaching graphic descriptions of sexual relations, but the relatively few passing references to characters' sexual habits and to private areas of the human body have drawn considerable fire. When one character in a story describes another as "Lord God among women," not only is there blasphemy but also what is felt to be a clearly lauditory statement of the character's promiscuous sexual successes. In addition, when, Let Us Now Praise Famous Men says that Ivy Pritchert "was one of the worst whores in this whole part of the country: only one that was worse was her mother," these censors see the reference to the sexual behavior implicit in the word "whore" as improper reading matter for students. The quotation from Malcolm X manages to combine blasphemy ("you would have thought God had lowered some of his angels"), sex ("males scrambling to get at those white women"), and miscegination ("Negro males. . .").

Descriptions of parts of the human body related to sex, or at least more appropriately private, bring objections, for example, "a pink ass baby," "Ramrod up his bun," "a sweet broad soft-looking can with those two crescents of white just under it." The objections to these passages are stated in terms of actions, ideas, attitudes, and parts of the body; but in most cases the initial objections were probably caused by the words used to portray these things rather than the things themselves. It might be argued, therefore, that this category of objection is a part of an objection to offensive words. Many of the censors deny this connection, however.

2. Obscene and Profane Words. A look at the list of passages will show that these textbooks do contain some words which would have been routinely deleted from earlier anthologies, if the works had been included at all. Although a few "damns" or "hells" have previously appeared in texts, the recent emphasis on including more contemporary selections has resulted in books with stronger words like the "son-of-a-bitch" and "bastard" of "Train Whistle Guitar." These words, despite their use by both presidents and laborers, still project a sense of non-politeness. Some more sophisticated of these censors claim that the words are not the real objections. They profess to see them only as symbols, as symptoms of a deeper moral decay. Nevertheless, these blasphemies and obscenities have, in fact, been the targets of most of the critics; and, without them to point to, the censors would have had a difficult time stirring up the public. Consequently, it is clear that most of the passages quoted as objectionable are there because of the obscene or blasphemous words they contain.

There are, in fact, few quotes on the list which do not contain such words. Most of us would probably argue that the use of these words by characters in a story does not constitute advocacy of them by the school. We would also probably maintain that most such words are essentially empty, that they are used like exclamation marks to express strong emotion rather than any particular meaning. These critics, nevertheless, find unacceptable the use of these words under any circumstances in material approved by the school and taught to children.

3. Objections to Mood. Some spokesmen for these censors have attempted to downplay these specific passages. They have objected instead to the

general tone of the selections, which they see as presenting a negative, hopeless, depressing picture of human life. At the same time they have also objected that the selections fail to present answers to questions and problems. Consequently, they see these works as suggesting that there are no answers, no solutions. According to these critics, the despair of Dylan Thomas in "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night," the hopelessness of Luzana Chally in "Train Whistle Guitar," the failure of the "preacher" to defend his faith in "The Sky Is Gray"(Ernest J. Gaines, Responding Six, pp. 250-253), and the death of Billy Budd, produce a message to the student that life is meaningless and leads nowhere.

At the heart of literature is, of course, interpretation. Where one reader sees despair, another may see a parable. Since despair has always been one theme of literature, some literature of despair is surely appropriate for an anthology for the same reason. Whether or not any collection of works of literature gives too much weight to one or the other point of view is, of course, virtually impossible to prove.

4. Improper Life Styles. Several of the stories from which these passages come present descriptions of people leading lives which the censors condemn. Luzana Chally in "Train Whistle Guitar" gambles, pursues women, does not work, and travels from place to place in a boxcar. He is a bad example and, the censors maintain, not fit for children to read about. On the other hand, the story appears in the senior literature book; and, in fact, this character himself rejects the boys who admire him and want to follow him. He leaves them and the reader with the following message:

> "Make old Luze proud of you," he said then, and he was almost pleading. "Make old Luze glad to take his hat off to you some of these days. You going further than old Luze ever even dreamed of. Old Luze ain't been nowhere. Old Luze don't know from nothing." (Responding Six, p. 81).

Nevertheless, the story does describe an unconventional, immoral way of life and so, like "We Real Cool," offends parents who do not want their children exposed to such people or their lives.

5. Religious Objections. Many of the objections voiced by these censors have been stated in religious terms. Protests about the presence in the textbooks of blasphemies and obscenities are often based on religious beliefs, and concern about sexual references can be traced to religious views. In addition, a scene like the one between the young student and the preacher in "The Sky Is Gray," containing the student's speeches attacking religion, has been seen as an attack by the author on religion. What the scene is saying about religion, if anything, is a matter of literary opinion. The theme seemed to me to be missed opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other, of people hurting rather than helping each other.

Vanishing Books

In his article, "Censorship in the 1970's: Some Ways to Handle It When It Comes (And It Will) " (English Journal, February, 1974, pp. 47-51), Ken Donelson presents a list of eight categories which cover most of the objections to these passages from the Responding series. But it is not only parents detecting sex and obscenity in school books who have been pushing censorship in the recent series of crises. It is not only fundamentalist clergymen finding anti-Christian and anti-American attitudes in library books who would like to control what students can read. In fact, at the risk of being called "paranoid," I would say that censors are nearly everywhere. To some extent, in some context, at some

point, on some issue, everyone is a potential censor. And Donelson's list could be extended and extended.

Thinking of the possibilities in such an extended list, I have suffered from a nightmarish vision involving a superintendent of a system where censorship crisis has followed censorship crisis. So many controversies have developed about the textbooks and library books that the superintendent finally says at a public meeting, "Oh, all right! If any three or more of you can agree that you don't like a particular type of book, come and take them away." And so the censors come, in large groups and small, one group after another; and they say, "I don't like it! Take it away."

One group comes protesting profanity in the books in the school library and the English textbooks. They find a "damn" here and a "goddamn" there. Part of the group concentrates on obscenities, and they find them in Zindel's I Never Loved You for Your Mind and Salinger's Catcher in the Rye. All books with any words stronger than "darn" are carried away by this group, and they go with loaded arms.

Next comes a group objecting to references to sex and sexual parts of the body. They look with special care for works that suggest or imply that illict sexual relations have taken place and are particularly insensed at books in which babies are born to unmarried teenage girls. Away go Sherburne's Too Bad about the Haines Girl and Mom, the Wolfman and Me (Norma Klein). The members of this same group pull all books which mention "unmentionable" parts of the body and nudity. On the discard pile go Blume's Are You There God? It's Me Margaret and Branscum's Johnnie May.

Even the suggestion that non-heterosexual relations might take place causes disgust and muttering of "filth." Wrapped in brown paper, Donovan's I'll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip and Hall's Sticks and Stones leave for the refuse pile.

As this group leaves, several of its members join an in-coming crowd seeking all books stating or implying that the theory of evolution may be more factually correct than Genesis. Along with Darwin go science materials and various works of history, especially books about pre-historic animals and men, which are seen as inventions of evil or deluded authors.

By now the librarian has fled in despair, and huge gaps are beginning to appear on the library shelves. Few textbooks are left in school bookroom, but the attack has only begun. A very large group appears to remove all unpatriotic works. Any book suggesting that there may be or ever may have been more than minor weaknesses in American society and all books critical of the American government, foreign policy, or national heroes are torn from the shelves. Nothing of John Steinbeck is left, and Hentoff's I'm Really Dragged But Nothing Gets Me Down and Judy Blume's Then Again, Maybe I Won't disappear as a result of the relentless search. Since America is conceived of as both a country and a way of life, books like Bonham's Durango Street and Hinton's That Was Then, This Is Now are carried away by this group on the premiss that they promote an un-American way-of-life. The same group also objects to several books like Sounder by Armstrong and Macho! (Villasenor) as picturing white Americans in a bad light.

Led by their clergymen, a new group appears to examine what is left for anti-Christian elements. The Koran, several books about philosophy, Chariot of the Gods, and Knudson's Jesus Song, somehow having survived early scrutiny, now pass from the school in a small but heavy carton. In

the same box are all the books about witches, sorcery, and superstitions, including Black Magic, White Magic (Jennings) and Myths Every Child Should Know (Mabrie).

The next group, feeling that children should not have to read about death because it is depressing, finds many works to remove. Langone's Death Is a Noun goes, along with The Edge of Next Year by Mary Stolz and Ann Sarton's As We Are Now. At the same time, this group removes a number of other books, like Jeannett Eyerly's The Girl Inside, which deal with sickness and insanity. "Too depressing," they call them. And so it goes. One group is offended by books that they see as promoting dishonesty, books like Manchild in the Promised Land (Claude Brown) and Undertow (Havrevold). Another takes off books like Go Ask Alice and A Hero Ain't Nothing but a Sandwich (Alice Childress) which deal with drugs.

At the same time, several parents have found a number of books whose characters use expressions like "he ain't" and "it don't." School books should not teach bad grammar they say and pull Armstrong's The Mills of God from the shelves. Books that teach disrespect for parents, like Pevsner's A Smart Kid Like You, and books by immoral or un-American authors, like A Picture of Dorian Gray (Oscar Wilde) and April Morning (Howard Fast), also disappear. One parent discovers a copy of Alive (Read) and a chorus of outrage over a book about cannibalism follows.

Hard on the heels of this group come several people looking with eager eyes for works that show or imply that women are proper only in passive roles connected with keeping house, having children, and serving husbands. Early books by Betty Cavanna and Ann Emery disappear along with David Copperfield. Beatty's Hail Columbia!, with its satire of a liberated woman, draws particular fire.

Several other groups arrive at the same time looking for books that stereotype or show bias against the ethnic group to which they belong. Several series of books, previously untouched, are withdrawn by these censors, series like those staring Nancy Drew and Sue Barton. More recent works like Genevieve Gray's The Yellow Bone Ring and Creighton's Tecumseh go, along with older books like Caddie Woodlawn and The Matchlock Gun.

And so the stream continues: Blacks censor, native Americans censor, Chicanos censor, Italian-Americans censor. Jewish censors remove Oliver Twist; Roman Catholic censors remove The Chocolate War (Cormier). A group of Gay Liberations appears to weed out books showing homosexuals in a negative stereotype; but, as the very suggestion --even negative-- of such conduct has been offensive to several earlier groups, nothing is left even acknowledging their existence.

A group of atheists pulls several Bibles and books of Bible stories that have somehow escaped earlier notice. Several parents who object to the unhealthy effects of fantasy carry away the few remaining works of that type, like Alice in Wonderland and all the science fiction in the library. Finally, a contingent of college English professors, applying their lofty literary standards, pulls the last half-dozen popular novels and a dozen or so junior novels, like Hot Rod and Seventeenth Summer, that remain. "Not up to standard!" they say. "Trash!" "Unworthy of reading!"

In my nightmare, there is nothing left in the bookroom or the library. Biographies have disappeared for this reason or that. Shakespeare has not remained, for the censors have realized what he really wrote about--death, despair, adultery, witch craft, filial ingratitude. No Edgar Allen Poe--insanity, murder, the supernatural; no Hawthorne--adultery, witchcraft.

Twain is gone--racial stereotypes and disrespect for parents. A few elementary school dictionaries have survived, but adult dictionaries and encyclopedias have been taken away. Think, after all, of the words and ideas that students might look up in them! No art books remain--naked people--and few works on science--too much evolution.

Empty shelves may be an hyperbole, but the wreckage of a library and a textbook collection that such a visitation would leave behind, the meager gleanings which such a plague of locusts would leave teachers and students needs no exaggeration to frighten and appall.

Dealing With the Problem

As the saying goes, there are no easy answers to the descent of the censors. Sincere, honest, each with his own good case, they will collectively carry off all that matters in books. Intelligent and, except on one point, rational people, they often will not listen to reason when their own special demon has been identified as in the school. Still, as English teachers, we, more perhaps than any of our colleagues in other fields, hold the key to satisfying the reasonable objections to the books the school uses and to limiting those objections when our students in their turn become parents.

Bias in literature concentrates on characters and their actions. Criticism of a work of literature as biased is really a statement that the author has created stereotypes, that he has a stereotypic concept of women, native Americans, Black people, etc. Bias means that this stereotypic view has governed his writing. It distorts both the individual characters and the total effect of all the characters he creates. Not only is one woman a stereotype, but all women in the book are stereotypes.

A pattern of such characters within a book and from book to book justifies a charge that the book or body of work is biased and that it may, therefore, help to create and reinforce biased views in readers, especially young and, therefore, theoretically, impressionable readers.

To some extent, such books will be eliminated because authors who constantly create stereotypes tend to be generally poor writers. They will create not only weak, flat, stereotyped characters but also weak plots and drab settings, use a pedestrian style, and fall into the trap of didacticism on the one hand or an unsatisfying themelessness on the other. Unfortunately, however, all authors who create stereotypes are not worthless, and all books with stereotyped characters are not unsatisfying dull stories told in drab English about boring people living in boring places. In fact, of course, were they, there would be no need to worry about bias in literature. Biased literature would rarely be read and then with no enjoyment, and a stereotype presented in such an ineffectual context would have no harmful effect on the reader.

Yet, many of the most continuingly popular of children's and adolescent's books are subject to the criticism of stereotyping. Interracial Books for Children has presented convincing analyses of the Mary Poppins books, the Doctor Dolittle books, and the Nancy Drew books: and several articles in Elementary English have pointed out the female-male stereotypes which seem to be everywhere in literature textbooks. Most of the selections in literature books which contain stereotypes are, of course, by otherwise competent authors, many of whom are justifyably very famous.

Even if we were able to remove all stereotypes from beginning readers, force a dropping of books containing stereotypes from publishers' lists, cull them from library shelves, and have anything left, students would eventually have to face and deal with bias and stereotyping in books. When they leave the protected cocoon of the language arts classroom for the world of the popular adult book and the classic, they will, if they have never faced them, be unprepared to control those elements in the books they read. Consequently, while carefully avoiding the biased, stereotypic work--except perhaps as an object lesson--the language arts teacher should put more emphasis on preparing students to recognize and, therefore, not be influenced by the stereotypes in the books they read. It matters little that the native Americans or Chicanos or Orientals in a generally worthwhile selections carry the vestiges of the common stereotype. Nor, in fact, will it matter that there is scarcely a woman in all of Dicken's novels who does not possess the worst stereotypic characteristics. It will not matter, that is, if we have taught the student to recognize the stereotype, see it as a failing in the work, and, in judging the worth of the book, weigh that failing against other strengths--other characters given true individuality, settings vividly drawn, plots deftly constructed, words effectively used. If the students can say of That Was Then. This is Now, "Well, the girls in it are all really alike. They're not very real. But it's a good story. I liked the way she showed how parents and children sometimes don't understand each other," then we will not have to worry about biases in literature.

At the same time, English teachers have the responsibility to help students look beneath the surface of a work of literature, to be sensitive to its tone, to judge it on its own grounds, in other words, to be able to interpret a work of literature based on what is actually there. Much of

the criticism of the literature in the Responding series has resulted from a misreading of those works. Is Erskin Caldwell's "Indian Summer" really a dirty work? It seems to me it is just the opposite. It is a story about innocence, about the dawning of awareness, about, in a way, Adam and Eve just before the fall. Is Ernest Gaines "The Sky is Gray" an attack on Christianity? Or is it a story of missed chances, of people who should be able to help each other, hurting each other instead, as I suggested earlier?

When the product of our classes or those of the teachers who come before us can read so superficially that they see "Train Whistle Guitar" as a dirty, immoral story, then we have failed miserably. No reader who is able to interpret with sensitivity will be put off by a few curse words. Most of us maintain that all genuine literature is moral, yet we have obviously failed to put that idea across. The whole censorship mess in Virginia has been doubly frustrating because most of the criticisms have been based on sincere but total misinterpretations of the works involved. The critics often seemed to be talking about a different set of stories than the ones I read. Only the titles and a few obvious points seemed to be the same. So, I often found myself saying, "But that's not what it's about!" Helping students to develop the skills to interpret literature is one of our missions; we need to work harder at it.

At the same, time, English teachers must work to counteract the belief that books always teach true lessons, a belief that we ourselves have been responsible for spreading. When parents see obscene words in schools books, they assume that we are now promoting such words. They believe such a silly thing because we have taught them to believe that selling something is the purpose of a book. How often English teachers have pushed the

moral, paraded the lesson of each work they taught! Didacticism has been our stock in trade. When students see literature not as teaching morals but as stimulating discussions, not as guiding behavior but as provoking re-examination of beliefs, when they feel that they can say, "I don't agree with that at all. He may be a great writer, but he's all wrong about that," then literature will be in its proper place. The so-called "power" of literature will not be seen as a power to sway but a power to bring about thought.

In a strange way, the censors' protests against books are a tribute to how well we have sold books as influencing beliefs and conduct. We have sold them as having some magical hypnotic power, and so parents fear them. When they see that, in fact, their children's ideas may be strengthened by a contact with a work that challenges those beliefs, then perhaps they will let us look with our students at those works. But we must be careful not to say of books, even of the greatest of books, "These authors are great so they must be right." In a sense, we must prove to parents that what we do equips students to understand and to respond to literature but also to resist being persuaded by the rhetorical skill of any writer--that is, if, in fact, we are accomplishing these goals.

"And Then There Were None"--Take It Away! I Don't Like It

Obscenities and Blasphemies

Zindel, I Never Loved You for Your Mind
Hansbury, A Raisin in the Sun
Salinger, The Catcher in the Rye

Sex

Sherburne, Too Bad About the Haines Girl
Klein, Mom, the Wolfman and Me
Dickey, Deliverance

Un-mentionable Parts of the Body and Nudity

Branscum, Johnnie May
Blume, Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret

Un-natural Sex

Donovan, I'll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip
Hall, Sticks and Stones
Scoppettone, Trying Hard To Hear You

Pro-Evolution

Golding, The Inheritors
Clark, Early Man
Colbert, The Dinosaur Book

Anti-America

Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath
Hentoff, I'm Really Dragged but Nothing Gets Me Down
Blume, Then Again, Maybe I Won't

Un-American Way of Life

Bonham, Durango Street
Hinton, That Was Then. This Is Now.
Miller, The Cool World

Anti-Anglo-Saxon

Neufeld, Edgar Allen
Armstrong, Sounder
Villasennor, Macho!

Anti-Christian

Knudson, Jesus Song
Von Daniken, Chariot of the Gods
Muhammad, Koran

Witchcraft and Superstition

Jennings, Black Magic, White Magic
Mabrie, Myths Every Child Should Know
Aylesworth, Servants of the Devil

Death

Langone, Death Is a Noun
Stolz, The Edge of Next Year
Sarton, As We Are Now

Sickness and Insanity

Eyerly, The Girl Inside
Green, I Never Promised You a Rose Garden

Dishonesty

Brown, Manchild in the Promised Land
Havrevold, Undertow

Drugs

----, Go Ask Alice
Childress, A Hero Ain't Nothin' but a Sandwich
Wersba, Run Softly, Go Fast

Bad Grammar

Wright, Black Boy
Armstrong, The Mills of God
Johnston, Soul City Downstairs

Disrespect for Parents

Pevsner, A Smart Kid Like You
Neville, Garden of Broken Glass

Immoral or Un-American Authors

Wilde, A Picture of Dorian Gray
Fast, April Morning

Cannibalism

Read, Alive

Anti-Feminist

Dickens, David Copperfield
Beatty, Hail Columbia!
Cavanna, Angel on Skis

Biased Against Ethnic Groups

Lofting, The Story of Dr. Dolittle
Gray, The Yellow Bone Ring
Creighton, Tecumseh
Brink, Caddie Woodlawn
Edmunds, The Matchlock Gun
Styron, Confessions of Nat Turner
Pease, Mystery at Thunderbolt House

Religious Bias

Dickens, Oliver Twist
Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice
Cormier, The Chocolate War

Anti-Homosexual

Crowley, The Boys in the Band
Mailer, The Naked and the Dead

Pro-Religion

----Bible
Taylor, Taylor's Bible Story Book

Fantasy

Lewis, Out of the Silent Planet
Carroll, Alice in Wonderland

Trash

Felsen, Hot Rod
Daly, Seventeenth Summer
Benchley, Jaws